



United States Attorney's Office  
District of Columbia

Jeffrey A. Taylor  
United States Attorney

---

## NEWS RELEASE

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Saturday, March 7, 2009

**USAO Public Affairs**  
(202) 514-6933  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc)

### **Southeast Man Sentenced to 25 Years in Prison for Stabbing His Wife to Death**

WASHINGTON - A 48-year-old Southeast District of Columbia man, Steven Holman, has been sentenced to 25 years in prison for the murder of his wife, Valerie Ballentine, in February 2008, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor announced today.

Holman received his sentence yesterday in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia before the Honorable Herbert B. Dixon, Jr. A jury of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia deliberated for approximately 4 hours before delivering a verdict on November 21, 2008, finding the defendant guilty of Second Degree Murder While Armed.

The government's evidence at trial described an argument on February 10, 2008, between the couple that started when the victim, Valerie Ballentine, told the defendant to move out of the apartment, located in the 3600 block of 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, SE (PSA 702), that the two had shared with Ms. Ballentine's grandmother, Ms. Mary Lyons. The defendant confronted his wife with a knife, then stabbed her in the back. Ms. Ballentine ran into her grandmother's bedroom, and fell or was pushed on top of Ms. Lyons, age 90, who was sitting on the bed. According to the government's evidence, while the decedent was laying on top of her grandmother, the defendant continued his assault on Ms. Ballentine, stabbing her three times in the forehead. Though Ms. Lyons had died of unrelated health issues prior to the commencement of the trial, the jury heard her testimony via a previously videotaped deposition in which she described the experience of having her granddaughter die in her arms.

During yesterday's sentencing, Judge Dixon mentioned the powerful videotaped testimony of Mary Lyons as a factor in the conviction.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Taylor praised the work of Detectives George Blackwell, Lee Littlejohn, Jed Worrell, Jacqueline Middleton and Dean Combee as well as that of Mobile Crime Technicians J. D. Smith and Carmen Pagen. He also thanked Assistant Medical Examiner Ana Rubio of the Maryland Medical Examiner's Office for her assistance in the case. He praised the excellent work of Victim Advocate Marcia Rinker and Paralegal Kwasi Fields of the U. S. Attorney's Office. Finally, he acknowledged the efforts of former Assistant U.S. Attorney June Jeffries, who investigated and indicted the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Tom Gillice, who prosecuted it at trial.

###